and cunning, for the purpoſes of life, has been ſubſtituted in its ſtead.

The power of generalizing ideas, of drawing comprehenſive concluſions from individual obſervations, is the only acquirement, for an immortal being, that really deſerves the name of knowledge. Merely to obſerve, without endeavouring to account for any thing, may (in a very incomplete manner) ſerve as the common ſenſe of life; but where is the ſtore laid up that is to clothe the ſoul when it leaves the body?

This power has not only been denied to women; but writers have inſiſted that it is inconſiſtent, with a few exceptions, with their ſexual character. Let men prove this, and I ſhall grant that woman only exiſts for man. I muſt, however, previouſly remark, that the power of generalizing ideas, to any great extent, is not very common amongſt men or women. But this exerciſe is the true cultivation of the underſtanding; and every thing conſpires to render the cultivation of the underſtanding more difficult in the female than the male world.

I am naturally led by this aſſertion to the main ſubject of the preſent chapter, and ſhall now

now attempt to point out ſome of the cauſes that degrade the ſex, and prevent women from generalizing their obſervations.

I ſhall not go back to the remote annals of antiquity to trace the hiſtory of woman; it is ſufficient to allow that ſhe has always been either a ſlave, or a deſpot, and to remark, that each of theſe ſituations equally retard the progreſs of reaſon. The grand ſource of female folly and vice has ever appeared to me to ariſe from narrowneſs of mind; and the very conſtitution of civil governments has put almoſt inſuperable obſtacles in the way to prevent the cultivation of the female underſtanding:—yet virtue can be built on no other foundation! The ſame obſtacles are thrown in the way of the rich, and the ſame conſequences enſue.

Neceſſity has been proverbially termed the mother of invention—the aphoriſm may be extended to virtue. It is an acquirement, and an acquirement to which pleaſure muſt be ſacrificed—and who ſacrifices pleaſure when it is within the graſp, whoſe mind has not been opened and ſtrengthened by adverſity, or the purſuit of knowledge goaded on by neceſſity?—Happy